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ABSTRACT

People explore their world in many ways: they observe, they read, they ponder, they write, they listen. They also turn to others and intentionally engage them in their own attempts to understand. It is this turning-to-others that is the focus of this book, with reference to children. An act of inquiry is defined in the book as "a language act in which one attempts to elicit another's help in going beyond his/her own present understanding." The book's exploration of children's inquiry--what it is, how it develops, and how it contributes to children's learning--will help teacher educators and elementary teachers to understand, appreciate, and foster children's inquiry in classrooms. The book introduces a theoretical framework for understanding children's "inquiry" language--not as linguistic forms (questions), but as communication acts in which the child brings another into the act of sense-making. In closely examining these "inquiry acts," the book uncovers new possibilities for understanding how children learn and how teachers can foster their learning in classrooms. It features a wide range of voices and writings, including transcripts from homes and classrooms, class exercises, research findings, classroom episodes, and authorial reflections. Chapters in the book are: (1) Inquiry; (2) Inquiry Purpose; (3) Inquiry Purpose in the Classroom; (4) Inquiry's Forms and Functions; (5) Inquiry Expression; (6) Inquiry Expression in the Classroom; (7) Inquiry Dialogue; (8) Inquiry Dialogue in the Classroom; (9) Inquiry Style; (10) Inquiry Style in the Classroom; (11) Inquiry Context; and (12) Going beyond. (Contains chapter notes and approximately 250 references.) (NKA)

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